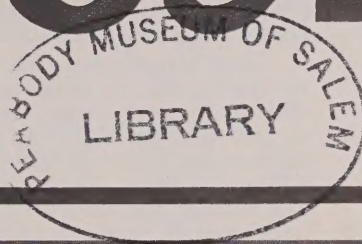




# **messing about in BOATS**

*Twice a Month*

Volume 1 ~ Number 18



February 1, 1984







# Commentary



## messing about in BOATS

PUBLISHED TWICE A MONTH, 24 ISSUES A YEAR. SUBSCRIPTION PRICE IS \$15 FOR 24 ISSUES, PRE-PAID ONLY. ADDRESS: 29 BURLEY ST.

WENHAM, MA 01984  
TEL. (617) 774-0906

PUBLISHER & EDITOR: BOB HICKS

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**BOB HICKS**



In our investigations into this sport of ice boating (or 'yachting' as the enthusiast of the sport prefers) we came face to face with an aspect of boating and the messing about with thereof which was totally new to us. We're not strangers to sports on ice, aside from ice skating when growing up we've also been involved in bygone days in motorcycle ice racing, took a shot at snowmobile ice racing, and viewed automobiles racing on ice. But sailing vehicles on ice were all new to us. So it was fun to dig into this sport and find out what is happening.

Most of our investigations of the soft water boating scene find us with some degree of experience, not a whole lot in any one, but we have sailed, rowed, motored and paddled. We're expert at none, but have a degree of awareness that enables us to at least know what to look for when we do a story on any of these. We tried windsurfing just once so far, and that hour spent almost entirely in the water. It's on the agenda for '84.

What we're leading into here is an explanation of the viewpoint of this publication as we get more involved. It is the viewpoint of an interested observer, with some background on which to base understanding of what we see or get to do. We're not expert, so you'll not find expert advice on any aspect of enjoying boats here. You can find all that in a host of special interest publications that range over the whole boating panorama. What we're bringing you is news about what is interesting, people, their boats, their experiences. We can say that the expertness needed for this is mainly that of observation. After almost 25 years of being a journalist this is a skill we do have that fits right into our intent with this newsletter.

We have been really pleased to receive letters from readers a whole lot more knowledgeable than we about something we reported on. An Olympic oarsman, on a four man shell for 1984, commented favorably on our report on the Head of the Charles. He recognized that it was not an expert report but commented that it caught the essence of the activity. That's what we had hoped to achieve. A professional naval architect remarked on the point we recently made editorially about creative people being quite capable of designing as well as building a boat

of their own. This reader deplored the same things we did, the implication in the more expert press that such projects are beyond those without training in boat design or building. So, again it seems the point we felt we wanted to make had some validity even though it was not an expert opinion.

As we said, there are plenty of publications which present expert and erudite articles on all aspects of boating, and they are very valuable and useful to us all, and we read several ourselves. So, when we finally decided to turn our own journalistic itch loose on boating, this paper resulted. With our only possible claim to expertise being that involving observing, inquiring, and reporting, the news nature of this paper was a logical choice. And, anyway, it's what we wanted. to do.

A really forceful reason for this preference is the opportunity for the new experiences which open up. Without getting seriously involved, at great expense and time, in any one aspect of boating, we can usually get, as journalists, a good first hand involvement in almost any aspect of boating that catches our interest. People love to demonstrate their particular enthusiasm to an interested journalist, even one involved with so modest a publication as this one. This permits us first hand experiences in all sorts of ways of messing about in boats.

The ice boats (yachts) happen to be in focus right now. Last summer we had a crack at sea kayaking. This coming spring there's canoe building and expedition experience scheduled. We've ridden in a Gold Cup replica speedboat, and sailed on several different sorts of boats, a Tancook schooner, a Bolger catboat, a 12' dory, etc. etc. There are many more yet to come. We're going to be trying a real racing single shell come spring, thanks to that report on the Head of the Charles.

We guess you can see how much fun all of this can be, and we'll be bringing back reports and photos for publication. For many of you, your experiences will be similar to what you would experience were you to have been along, something new and different. By aiming at a broad spectrum of ways for messing about in boats, we hope to introduce many readers to new experiences



## Our Next Issue

... will go into the mail about February 1st. Subscription orders received before that date will begin with that issue, #19, unless otherwise requested. You may order back issues as part of your subscription, from Issue #3 on through #10, and from #13 to present. #1, #2, #3, #11 and #12 are now all gone.

## In the Next Issue

... Chuck Sutherland will bring us more on kayak safety, a detailed self rescue system he has devised, and a couple of more reports on "close calls," important stuff for winter on-the-water activities especially. We've got several interesting "camper cruiser" reports sent on by readers, we'll have a look at them. I may have been able to take a shot at iceboating in time, maybe not, we'll see. And, as usual, more items like info on plans to build your own Hackercraft of yesteryear, etc.

## On the Cover

... late afternoon sun on the sails of a group of DN iceboats on Wakefield, Massachusetts' Lake Quannapowett. We have quite a bit more on hard water sailing in this issue.





# **messing about in BOATS**

*Twice a Month*

## **16 times in 1983...**

MESSING ABOUT IN BOATS went into the U.S. mail, but you probably received only two or three of them as free samples. This is the last of the free samples, our hope is that you'll sign up now for your own personal subscription.

Inside this pamphlet is an index of all the articles we published in those 16 issues. No matter your own personal interest in boats, you'll find articles of interest and entertainment in this index. Coming in future issues are a whole lot more.

In a previous sample copy we included a pamphlet in which we answered the most commonly expressed doubts about MESSING ABOUT IN BOATS. Now you know what we're doing, why we're here to stay and where we're going.

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Some Good Buys in Byproducts - A dozen traditional boat buys.  
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DORIS, A Delightful Dinghy - 12' of mini-dory, sail & oar.

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PATINA's Log - A breezy fall sail.

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IN EVERY ISSUE:

Updated Calendar of Coming Events and Activities.  
Updated Classified Advertising, FREE for Subscribers.  
Editorial Commentary on Issues Pertinent to Current Events.

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# **Boats**

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# What's happening...

## JANUARY 31: STEAMSHIP LECTURE, PEABODY MUSEUM, SALEM, MA.

A new Steam and the Sea permanent exhibit opened in October at the Peabody Museum in Salem, MA and this lecture is one of the scheduled special features of the exhibit. Entitled, "Ocean Liners, Profiles, Promenades and Public Rooms, the lecture is at 7:30 p.m. No extra admission charge over regular Museum admission is made. John Maxtone-Graham, author of THE ONLY WAY TO CROSS is lecturer.

The entire exhibit is fascinating to anyone enamored of the great days of steamships on the seas. Curator of Maritime History Paul Johnston was responsible for this major new display, and also wrote an accompanying book, STEAM AND THE SEA, available from the Museum for \$25 clothbound, \$15 in paperback. It is an 8 x 10 size, 96 pages, with many old photographs never before published. For further information contact the Peabody Museum, East India Square, Salem, MA 01970.

## JANUARY 31: LOCAL BOATBUILDING LECTURE, CUSTOM HOUSE MARITIME MUSEUM, NEWBURYPORT, MA.

Bill Plante will talk about a trimaran and Richard Johnson will speak on a catboat. Program begins at 7:30 p.m. Non-member admission is \$1.50. For further information call (617) 462-8681.

## JANUARY 31: WINTER WORKSHOP, MYSTIC SEAPORT MUSEUM, MYSTIC, CT.

Jeff Marshall, a local boatbuilder, will lead this workshop on New Small Craft Design, focussing on new small boats and dinghies recently arrived on the market. Registration fee is \$6, contact the Public Affairs Office, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, CT 06355, (203) 572-0711, Ext. 318. Program runs from 7 to 9 p.m.

## FEBRUARY 2: CONNECTICUT RIVER OAR & PADDLE SOCIETY MONTHLY MEETING, OLD SAYBROOK, CT.

The February meeting of this group will feature a lecture on the geographical and cultural history of the Connecticut River Valley, at 7 p.m. at the Seth Persson Boatyard in Old Saybrook. For more details, call Jon Persson at (203) 388-2343.

## FEBRUARY 3: PEABODY MUSEUM TSCA ANNUAL POTLUCK SUPPER, PEABODY MUSEUM, SALEM, MA.

This will be the fourth annual potluck supper meeting for the Traditional Small Craft Association at the Peabody Museum. It is open to members and guests, beginning at 7 p.m. For more details call Bob Hicks at (617) 774-0906.

## FEBRUARY 10 - 12: MEDICAL TRAINING FOR SAILORS, BEVERLY, MA.

Health On the Water, Inc. (HOW) will conduct a series of seminars this year for sailors concerning medical skills needed for emergencies while out of reach of help. The three day course in February will be on the Massachusetts north shore at Beverly. It is an intensive course taught by three physicians with extensive clinical sailing and teaching experience who have formed HOW to further medical training for people who sail. Full details on this course and on HOW can be obtained by contacting Christopher R. Brigham, M.D. Health on the Water, Inc. P.O. Box 24, Bar Harbor, ME 04609, (207) 288-4523, or (207) 288-5024.

## FEBRUARY 14 & 16: SURVEYING WOODEN BOATS WORKSHOP, MAINE MARITIME MUSEUM, BATH, ME.

The February program in the series described under the January 17 & 19 heading above will feature marine surveyor Jan Bijhouwer discussing what surveying can do for anyone contemplating purchase of a wooden boat.

## FEBRUARY 16: SCHOONER CRUISE TALK & SLIDE SHOW, CUSTOM HOUSE MARITIME MUSEUM, NEWBURYPORT, MA.

Max Scholz and Lavana Synder of Newburyport spent three years sailing their staysail schooner AUDACITY in the Caribbean, Africa and Europe and will show us slides of these adventures and discuss them at 8 p.m. Non-member admission is \$1.50. For further information call (617) 462-3681.

## FEBRUARY 21: LOCAL BOATBUILDING LECTURE, CUSTOM HOUSE MARITIME MUSEUM, NEWBURYPORT, MA.

David Stickney will discuss alterations made to HEART'S DESIRE, a 1921 era wooden schooner. Ed Siegmann will talk about building a Norwegian pram in his dining room. Program begins at 7:30 p.m. Non-member admission is \$1.50. For further information call (617) 462-8681.

## FEBRUARY 21: WINTER WORKSHOP, MYSTIC SEAPORT MUSEUM, MYSTIC, CT.

An expert from the Dyer Dhow Co. will explain how to do fiberglass and epoxy work, and George Moffett, captain of the Seaport's schooner, BRILLIANT, will demonstrate varnish application. Registration fee is \$6, contact the Public Affairs Office, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, CT 06355, (203) 572-0711, Ext. 318. Programs run from 7 to 9 p.m.

## FEBRUARY 25: ANNUAL SNOW ROW RACE, HULL, MA.

The Hull Lifesaving Museum sponsors this annual rowing competition in mid-winter, with full local Coast Guard cooperation. It's open to experienced oarsmen and paddlers, traditional boats, sea kayaks, etc. Boats must be seaworthy craft as race is held in area where seas can be significant. The start is at 2 p.m. and there's usually a pretty good post event party. For further details contact Ed McCabe at 24 Fairmount Dr. in Hull, MA 02045.

## FEBRUARY 26: STEAMSHIP LECTURE, PEABODY MUSEUM, SALEM, MA.

Second in a series of lectures as detailed under the January 31st heading on this page, this is entitled, "Odds and Ends of Steamship Design. Lecturer is John Waterhouse, Curator of the Hart Nautical Collections at the MIT Museum in Cambridge, MA. He will discuss the naval architecture of the big steamships. No admission is charged above the regular Museum admission.

## NEWBURYPORT'S CUSTOM HOUSE MUSEUM 1984 SCHEDULE.

The Custom House Museum in Newburyport is located at 25 Water St in the restored historic downtown part of town, in the granite block former custom house. A number of special programs have been scheduled for 1984 and we will list these as they become current throughout the coming year, beginning in this issue. Regular hours open to the public for viewing the maritime history collections are Monday through Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. This until March 17th when the hours will be expanded, Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Sundays from 1 to 4 p.m. Interested readers may inquire for further information by calling Regina Tracey at (617) 462-8681. This is a fascinating little museum of local maritime history easily enjoyed in a few hour tour at very moderate cost.

## REAL RUNABOUT POSTERS

Bob Speltz, the man who wrote those books on the real runabouts, has three great posters available for the mahogany speedboat fan. Each is 23" x 29" in full color on white poster stock. Each sells for \$9.65. The REAL RUNABOUTS feature color photos of 53 runabouts, old and new. CHRIS CRAFT has 49 color photos of models from 1924 through 1965. CENTURY shows 36 color photos from 1927 through 1967. You can order them from Speltz at Antique Boat Posters, 505 Albert Lea St. Albert Lea, MN 56007. Add for postage, \$1.20 for one, \$1.70 for two, \$2.00 for all three. They come rolled in a cardboard tube. Nice items.





# ANORAK



## ASSOCIATION OF NORTH ATLANTIC KAYAKERS

### Brian Insley



Our friend and fellow sea kayaker **Brian Insley**, died while paddling in a ferocious wind storm on Lake Winnepesaukee, NH on Saturday, October 29, 1983.

Brian was a fisherman. He had a socket mounted on the rear deck of his boat to hold his pole for trolling. I think he told me about catching a bluefish this way. On the strength of that he had promised to write for me a few paragraphs about fishing from kayaks.

Brian was one of the seventeen northeast paddlers whose interest in paddling was sufficient that he came down to Narragansett Bay on Columbus Day weekend for a few days of group paddling, exchange of ideas and general good fellowship. Out on Dutch Island Saturday evening I helped him put up his big dome tent. I held his gas lantern up in the air so the light could reach to where he was working with the poles. We all admired the fancy screen dome the tent had. He was the only one of us with a decent lantern.

Brian was also a craftsman. He showed us the paddle he made. The blades were elliptical and spoon shaped. They appeared perfectly matched. The paddle was as finely finished as any commercially made blade. He told me how he had drilled out the shaft to reduce its weight. I don't know anything about working with wood, but I was impressed that he had such precise control over the drilling process that he could core the shaft without coming out the side somewhere down its length. He said he might be interested in making them for people and I had planned to mention this in print.

Ken Fink called me on Monday

morning, October 31st, and told me he had bad news. There was a windstorm blowing on Saturday when Brian took his boat out through the skin ice on Lake Winnepesaukee. Somewhere out on the Lake he died. His body was found near a dock on Sunday morning. It took one man in a 23 foot powerboat who had been out on the Lake that Saturday two hours to go five miles in seas up to 7 feet high. That powerboater, who said he'd been on the Lake for 30 years, stated it was the second worst storm he had ever experienced on the Lake.

Brian was the first person to sign up for my ANorAK Newsletter (and an early subscriber to MESSING ABOUT IN BOATS TOO, Ed.). He owned the first kayak of its design to arrive on the east coast. His was the demo boat for Symposium '82. His boat and mine were delivered on the same trailer in January of this year.

I am certain that all of us in the paddling community feel sick and saddened by this tragedy. His wife and family have the deepest sympathy of us all. We knew Brian. Whether he paddled with us or alone, he was one of us. To the extent that we have failed to adequately impress on one another the dangers of sea kayaking, we have failed one another and we failed Brian. We will analyze this tragedy as best we can and take such steps as we are able to prevent this from happening again. This message is just to say for all of us that Brian was a fine fellow, a good person to have as a friend. We are all very sorry that this tragedy happened to him and his family.

Chuck Sutherland

### What will it take to instill safety habits?

It is a sad thing to have to report on the death of a friend and fellow sea kayaker. And it wasn't just an isolated incident unhappily. Since Brian Insley's death there has been another on the west coast and a near miss, and two other close calls here in the east coast. Except for the fatality on the west coast, which occurred in a group, these incidents all involved kayakers paddling alone in storm conditions. It appears that on these stormy days there were paddlers out alone in widely separated locations along the coast, all of whom were subjected to similar conditions.

On November 25th Janice and Bill Lozano and I were down on Chesapeake Bay. The wind was gusting to over 50 mph. We chose not to go out. That same weekend up in Narragansett Bay, Steve Cournoyer spent 1-1/2 hours in 50 degree water after 12 foot seas removed him from his kayak. His body temperature dropped to 88 degrees by the time he got ashore and reached help and he spent the night in the hospital. Out on New York's Great South Bay, Ray Markowitz was caught by the same storm and spent the night marooned on Thatcher Island. He had no light and the Coast Guard was unable to find him until daylight. Steve was wearing a wetsuit and Ray had some protective clothing with him. Without this clothing both men would probably have died from exposure.

It seems to me that we have completely failed to convince people of the dangers of open water paddling in winter conditions. There is relative safety in numbers. In the cases cited, those numbers might have convinced one another to at least have stayed in protected waters. In most cases, nobody is going to be able to assist someone else in steep breaking seas. But they might be able to signal with a smoke canister or fire a flare. Even talking the victim into calmer water would help. Steve Cournoyer spent some time swimming hopelessly against the current before finally going around the current jet.



Is it going to be the case that only such fatalities and near misses are going to instill an effective sense of caution in habitual lone paddlers? (I am an offender in this regard at times). I want to see new inexperienced ocean paddlers acquire a more tangible sense of the potential dangers of the sport, and I plan to review these accidents to that end in ANorRAK, our newsletter, in subsequent issues.

To this end I feel I have to review some aspects of Brian Insley's fatal outing that we presently do know. The water temperature was about 38 degrees. The wind, predicted to be strong that day, was apparently well over 40 mph. Brian went out alone. Although he paddled in the area nearly every weekend this past summer, he was not a trained river kayaker (Steve Cournoyer was so trained). Brian took no supporting equipment of any kind with him. The omitted items included a life jacket, wet suit, adequate boat flotation, signalling devices, sea anchor, spare paddle, gloves, change of clothes, something with which to be able to light a fire, any sort of hot drink. He did not appear to appreciate the severity of the weather conditions. The moment he lost control of his kayak, for whatever reason (capsize, lost paddle, broken paddle, etc.) his fate was sealed. He had nothing in his favor, not training, fellow kayakers, spare equipment, protection from the cold. He was, however, a strong swimmer.

It is obvious to me that we totally failed to convince Brian that the recommended precautions must be taken. I know he had been exposed to the information. He received a very explicit manual with his boat. He received an article on hypothermia by C. Walbridge (CANOE magazine, March 1981) distributed at the Sea Kayak Symposium in Castine last summer and he received the ANorRAK supplement issued this past October. I guess the message wasn't phrased in a way that brands the brain. So, as I asked earlier, is it going to take tragedies and near misses to do a more effective job of instilling safety habits in our sport's enthusiasts? I'll have more to say on this in subsequent articles.

Chuck Sutherland

## GRAYLING... another 85 years?

Douglas Goldhirsch is restoring an old catboat. Actually he is, in part, having it restored by Ed Viola and Dion Lynch of Sound Shipwrights in Mattituck, Long Island. The job just got too big for Doug to handle with his limited time, tools and skills. The catboat is 22 feet long by 10-1/2 foot beam and seems to have been built around 1898. When Doug's early efforts at restoration came up against the harsh reality of her needing an entirely new keel timber, he began his search for someone who could do this sort of major structural work at what would be affordable cost to him.

Doug met Viola and Lynch at the 1982 Wooden Boat Show (great place for such meetings) where they had on display a just restored 18 foot 1860's era sand-bagger, the ABE LINCOLN. Here was a restoration job not unlike the one Doug was facing, and subsequently Doug's catboat, GRAYLING, arrived at Sound Shipwrights. ABE LINCOLN, by the way, has been donated to the Suffolk Marine Museum collection of traditional small craft.

Douglas says that GRAYLING is surely old, for he found on board an undated license to navigate Boston area waters which seems to be (despite its lack of a date) from early in the century. The document did indicate that the boat was known as GRAYLING way back then, and was owned at that time by a man named Clarence Nickerson of Hull, MA. Conversation with Mr. Nickerson's descendants and people at the Hull Historical Society established a "passed down by word of mouth" building date of 1898, about 85 years ago.. One man recalled seeing GRAYLING around Hull before the turn of the century and believed her to have been built by the Crosbys of Osterville, MA. But, there is no builder's plate nor do Crosbys have any drawings of her.

Doug bought GRAYLING in March of 1982 from an ad in WOODEN BOAT magazine. She seemed at the time as advertised, in good condition. Doug knew at the time that she would need some work, but didn't imagine how much that would come to be. He stripped off the

paint and stripped out the interior to get a closer look at any possible problems. One thing she did need was a new centerboard trunk, the previous owner had put one through the garboard, plugging up the original slot in the keel, and the job was not well done.

When Doug began serious work in July 1982 (he is a teacher at Webb Institute in Glen Cove) he planned to replace frames and floors and put the centerboard trunk back through its original slot in the keel, which had been plugged many years ago. Without very good tools, and lacking experience, Doug didn't get very far and by mid-August he discovered that GRAYLING was going to also need a whole new keel! This after spending many hours under the boat opening up that old centerboard slot it was then that Doug decided he needed professional help. He had succeeded in bending some frames into the boat but had never fastened their ends due to the emerging keel problems. The frames he had laminated from 1/2x1 inch oak strips, two per frame

GRAYLING rested at Sound Shipwrights for nearly a year before work finally began in September of 1983. Now with winter at hand, she has been put under cover for winter storage. But she now has a new keel complete with centerboard slot, head ledges and case logs, a rebuilt stem, new sternpost and deadwood, many new floors and 16 new frames. Doug is quite pleased with this progress, but his limited funds are now putting the project into a 5 to 10 year perspective. He says he really is in love with old boats and this one in particular and feels that if he does a good job of restoration she should sail on for another 85 years.

Like many such old timers, GRAYLING does have rigging and spars still in good condition, a 34 foot mast and a beautiful hollow gaff which Doug believes to be original. The sail and original Edson steering quadrant, dated 1888, plus several old blocks dated in the late 1800's are also in hand to stimulate the dream of getting that hull back to the shape it needs to accept this original gear.



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# PATINA'S LOG

TIM WEAVER

The late fall, a necklace of changes, of moods and colors and warmth and cold, had its way.

First it was a sunset when the autumn leaves were still perfect, a dusky, earthen mixture, a redness in the shades of evening that electrified the air, a strange afterlight that danced and grayed the rippled surface of the cove. It spoke of change.

And I wanted to keep PATINA in the water as long as possible, but safely so. I didn't want her to get caught in the ice while moored a good ways out. The ice could shift, move her, break her loose, and there would be no way I could safely get to her under such conditions. I had waited one freeze out and did not want to wait out another. So, I moved her in close. Needed the "raise the mushroom anchor routine" for that plus the help of my brother, Mark. It was a Saturday afternoon of genuinely messing around. It came down to many trips back and forth from bow to stern. First we'd go to the bow, to snug up the mooring as tight as possible; then to the stern, a little ballet on the afterdeck. Then back to the bow, snug up the mooring a bit more; then to the stern again. And again, and again, and again. And finally we pried it loose, fifty

pounds of cast iron and seventy-five pounds of mud and twenty feet of chain. Anchor up, we moved her closer in and set her up again. Now, if a cold snap struck, I would be able to walk out, chop the ice, tie a rope from my truck to PATINA and get her to shore. And that was the kind of insurance I wanted.

Then came days of rain and wind and sleet, days that stripped the trees. Days that called for -- Daylight Savings Time was gone -- dawn rides to the cove to bail PATINA. Dawns when the eastern sky of pale greens and paler blues hung above great blued bands of piercing neon pinks that ushered in the sun. A sun that spilled a wash of gold on the land and on the cove and silvered the branches of the maples that crowded the marsh.

Edged in between these times were three fine weekend sails. Days when a hat, gloves, sweater and windbreaker were just right. Days of a steady breeze and mid-day sun. A breeze just right for her two-masted rig. A breeze that grabbed the large foresail and heeled PATINA and, as the main was trimmed and the foresheet eased, put her on her feet, moved her along. Good crisp sails with the wave off the stern showing a nice rise and boil; and the sound forward, a

quiet surging of water thrown from the bow, just so. Times when I could play with the sheets a bit and get her to sail herself and she could take a gust, and showing only a bit of weather helm, fade back on course, heading for the channel marker. Then, approaching the marker, it was "come about" and, close hauled, run across the cove amongst the gulls. And there, anchored sharpie style -- stern first -- there was time for tea. And watching. The blues and pearls and pewters, the deep shadows of the evergreens, the yellow ochre and sienna of the marsh, the empty cove. It told a tale.

And I wondered. Perhaps I'd catch an early winter sail, a sun fractured afternoon arriving on the heels of a light snow. A chance to sweep mint green decks and sail a bit, see things yet another way. And I almost did.

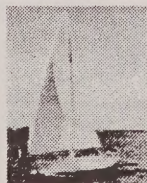
But fall was late. And winter too. The holidays were coming, there was much to do, too much. PATINA had to come out. She'd made the middle of December. Fine enough.

And for the "there's many a slip between one thing and another" department, I need a bit of line to set things right concerning a recent Log, the Log in which I spoke of what, for me, was a most exciting sail. And the subject is PATINA's sails. They are triangular, triangular sprit sails, I suppose, would accurately describe them. Chapelle calls them, "sprit leg-o-mutton rig". In any case, they are not four sided and, therefore, have no peak. The sprit runs perpendicular to the mast, or just about so.

Rigs and ways to sail PATINA just seem to go on and on, each year a bit more knowledge comes with experience. It is amazing how maneuverable she is with any calculated backwinding of the fore or main. But that's another story. One of the nicest, simplest and clearest explanation of small boat rigs is, in my opinion, in the Time-Life book, THE CLASSIC BOAT. And books, well, that's also another story. The winter should bring some nice armchair maritime adventures. And, re-reading BEAUTIFUL SWIMMERS is near the top of my list, and the official DN ICEBOAT HANDBOOK. And, Atkin's PRACTICAL SMALL BOAT DESIGNS. And, maybe, Chapelle's HISTORY OF AMERICAN SAILING SHIPS, which I just got from my brother, Pat. Winter will have some rewards.

Monthly  
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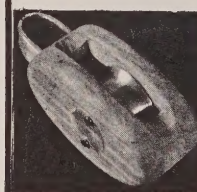
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# Behold the hard water sailors!

Report & Photos by Bob Hicks

January 1st was cold and partly cloudy here on the north shore of Massachusetts. The cold had been intense enough after an earlier tropical rain storm to have made up really good ice, we had surmised, so it seemed time to drive the 15 miles over to Lake Quana-powett in Wakefield, MA to see if the iceboats were out. This egg shaped lake of about a mile by 3/4 mile in size was said to be a local ice boating scene. As we pulled off Rt. 128 past the north end of the lake, we could see the sails out on the ice, it was indeed time for iceboat-ing.

At the southern end of the lake in the built up area of Wakefield, the town park was full of ice skaters, and we had to search a bit until we found the ice-boaters gathered halfway up the west shore at the closed for winter Quana-powit Yacht Club. Here they could unload right off trailer or cartop and head out.

We soon ascertained that this was not a "race" day, but just recreational iceboating. The moderate northwest wind and slate smooth ice provided what appeared to be ideal conditions. Most of the open area of the Lake was clear of "pedestrian" ice skaters, they were all mostly clustered at the southern end. The iceboats pretty well stayed away from the throng, as they were moving right along, in this soft water sailor's view, at 15 to 25 mph in maybe a 10 mph breeze. The single most unique impact to us was the almost silent speed as they would pass by, just a variable rumble of the runners

passing over imperfections in the surface of the ice.

It was an interesting mix of craft. From the sail markings we could see that the vast majority were the DN class, named after the class originator of some 50 years or so ago, the DETROIT NEWS. A few larger craft with enclosed "fuselages" were on the ice, several of these wider bodied with two persons aboard. And a couple of those Lockley Skimmers were there, smaller open tubular framed craft with the operator reclining in a sort of canvas hammock hung between the tubular frame members.

Two or three times a number of the boats, mostly the DN's, lined up by a bright red highway pylon (swiped from some project, no doubt) at the narrow of the lake towards its southern end. At some signal undetected by us on shore, they would run alongside their craft to get moving, like bobsledders, and then they'd be off, beating north into the north-west breeze to a pylon way up near the Rt. 128 end of the lake. In a while they'd be back, much like any other race, now strung out, and swing around that southern pylon for another lap, some hanging tight, others sliding sideways (dull runners?). Meanwhile the rest, maybe a couple of dozen, were heading about in the random way any summer Sunday in the bay will find daysailers.

One big man with graying hair in a bulky snowmobiler suit came in to stop, heading up into the wind, then back-

winding the sail with his free hand. Once stopped, he jumped out, flipped the parking brake down into the ice on the front runner and came "ashore". His boat had an enclosed fuselage with a steering wheel. What was this craft? "It's a DN I modified," he explained. "The fuselage is the original DN pan with the top built up from foam panels sandwiched in glass and resin. The wheel is from a Cessna aircraft, it connects to the runner via some ten speed bicycle sprockets and chain." It was colorful and provided much more comfort than the coffin like open boxes of the typical DN's.

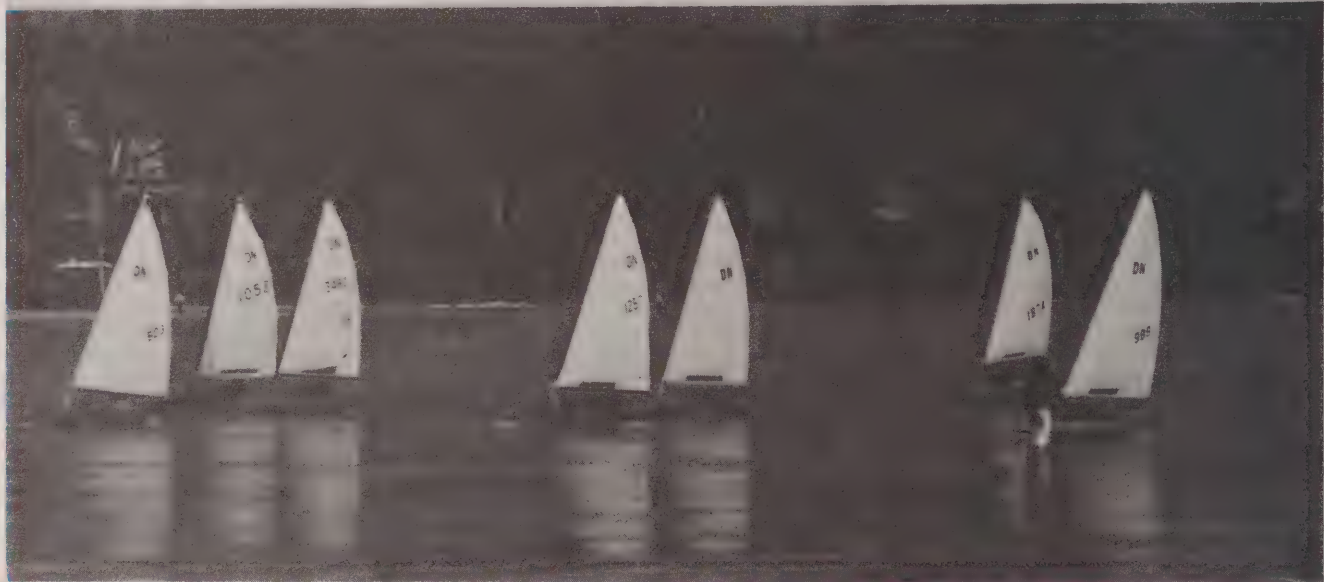
"It's a bit heavy, though," he allowed. "No, I don't race it, but it does not have the acceleration of the lighter boats. Once she gets going, though, she'll move right out." So, no racing, but still the love of the speed.

Then we saw what had to be inevitable. Down the lake came a young man on a windsurfer. Well, it was a windsurfer sail anyway, mounted on a short narrow board with fore and aft runners. He was moving, and maneuvering just as his summer counterpart would.

So here's a pictorial look at local weekend iceboating for fun, and we'll be attending a race or two soon to see how this all compares with its summertime counterpart. And, we're looking around to find a ride, to sample what the thrill of this sport (speed for sure) consists of. Should be great fun.

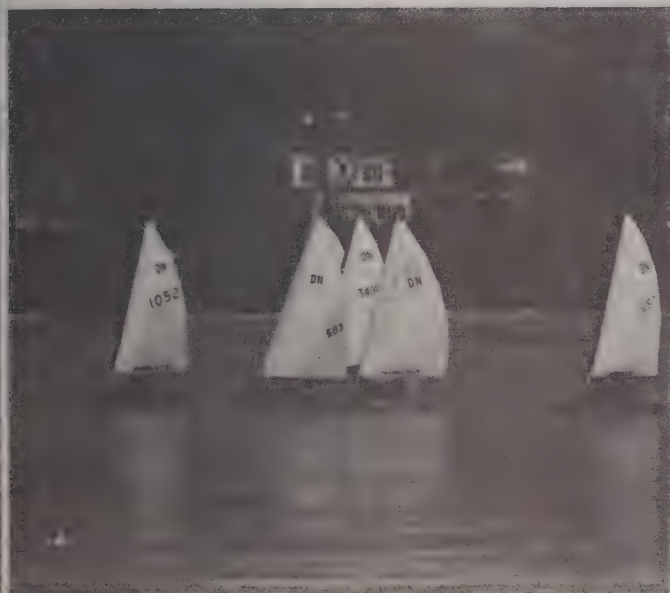
Report & Photos by Bob Hicks





Top left: It had to happen, the winter windsurfer. Center left: Basic iceboat, the Lockley Skimmer is a frame with a hammock. Far right: Solo or double, a DN and a Nite. Group photos: An informal race gets away, top to bottom, right to left.







One man's  
concept of a  
proper ice yacht,  
the...



# International Challenger 5-Meter

"I tell the DN owners they ought to turn their fuselages upside down, to improve the aerodynamics," Dan Sheehan remarked. "I've seen a whole lot of broken DN's in my time," he goes on, "broken right in half even." Dan does have an axe to grind, he builds two different ice yachts out of fiberglass.

Dan has another of those backyard boatbuilding shops hidden away on an otherwise innocent suburban street. His is in the cellar of a sort of rundown old garage, maybe carriage house, on a sort of rundown small estate in Wayland. No, he doesn't live there. One walks past the weathered building to the right, descends a banking, turns left, opens a creaky plank door, and, "Voila", polyester resin assails the nostrils. Inside it is dark, no windows. On with the light, and now we see it. A semi-finished plug for an Adirondack guideboat, the plug Dan made from a J.R. Robertson canoe that is the basis for his 17' footer. Fiberglass parts for a sea kayak. The molds for two iceboats, one know as the Challenger, the other the Glass Skipper. A wood stove provides the heat when the resin is being used.

Dan doesn't earn a living at this, he explains. He's some sort of electron-

ic consultant, we didn't inquire into that as it isn't germane to this report. He makes his money in that field, and builds his boats mostly for fun. They are all built to order, a couple of canoe models, the two iceboats, also the Robertson replica and the Adirondack guideboat. Anyone see a fiberglass Adirondack guideboat yet?

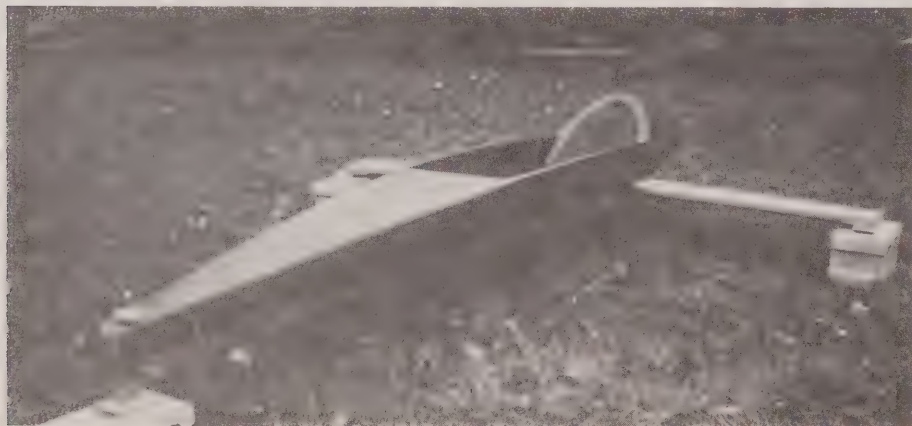
Why is he doing this? Same reason as most such small time builders, he just loves it. So he loves polyester. I can't stand the smell, he doesn't seem to notice it. He thinks building in glass as he does is just as challenging and rewarding as building in wood, and I have to admit that it certainly is challenging.

Back to the iceboats. Dan developed The Glass Skipper as an improved (his viewpoint) version of the venerable DN. Like he said, those wooden ones break a lot, especially all the home built ones. So out he comes with a nice rugged, light fuselage with cleaner looking aerodynamics, it will take all the standard DN gear, rig, sails, runners, etc, etc. He petitions the DN Association to license him as an official builder of glass DN iceboats. No luck, the rules say the DN is to be made of wood, and that's that.

So Dan takes his Glass Skipper to some iceboat gatherings. He cannot race it officially, but he manages to get into pick-up races and proves, to his satisfaction, that his boat is faster and easier to sail. Well, no welcome for that, he is something of a pariah. There are LOTS of wooden DN's around, and since speed is the real name of this game, his too fast version is unwelcome.

Today Dan doesn't bother to promote that boat, he's got a better one, one that doesn't intrude on the DN ice directly. The International Challenger is an impressive name, maybe a bit presumptuous, but quite a nice rig. Dan concentrates on this one because he worked out all the production bugs he ran into on the Skipper when he set about building the Challenger. "I can build this boat easier than the other and it sells for almost twice as much," he explains. That's about \$3800 complete, and it is ALL custom if you like at that price. Dan has a number of these out on the ice around the country, one super fan is way out in Minnesota somewhere and sends Dan photos of the action there.

The basic philosophy here is that the use of resin and glass permits finer aerodynamic shape for reduction of wind resistance at those 40, 50, 60 mph speeds. Talk about windage in an 8 knot sailboat, think of the drag at 60 mph. "The DN is just a rectangular box pushing through the air," Dan says. He points out how the Challenger fuselage is so much more curvaceous, much like a sort of thick airplane wing, thin edge up front. And he gets lightness and strength with the foam sandwich approach, the fuselage is glass and resin over foam core pieces, proven technique in hi-tech stuff today in fields outside of boats, as well as in boating.



Dan's Glass Skipper, an attempt to market a fiberglass version of the DN. No luck.



The runner plank and springboard are wood, of course. The steering is with a rigid tie rod, not cables. The mainsheet is six part, and runs to the tack where it also functions as a downhaul (so do DN's properly rigged). The sail is a high aspect ratio of 60 sq. ft. the fuselage is 5 meters long, 16' 5".

Dan developed his resin/glass approach working for a while with Bart Hawthaway, who lives only a few miles away. Bart has a whole line of glass kayaks and canoes, and that's where Dan came from. He grew up in West Roxbury on the Charles River and was in canoes at an early age. There were still canoe clubs locally at that time, right after World War II, and Dan has had a lifelong involvement with canoes, later kayaks, including the river racing, white water, all that. Bart was heavily into that too. So, for a while Dan was with Bart, but later he went on his own. His 40 pound Ojibway Canoe is of Bart Hawthaway influence. The 17 foot Long Nose is his own, based on the Robertson.

So what's the challenge in this glass building I mentioned? All the wood boat nuts (including me) don't really much like the plastic stuff to work with, anyway. Well, the big problem is finish. The mold will accurately reproduce in the hull it creates any imperfections at all. So the plug from which the mold is made has to be perfect. When you view a glassy smooth hull you instantly spot any waviness, dimples, pits, potholes, the minor stuff a wooden boat, even finished bright, can get away with not being too noticeable. Dan's slaving over the Adirondack plug right now. "This is the time I wonder why I'm doing this," he complains. Endless sanding and smoothing and fairing and filling and sanding and smoothing and fairing, and . . .

"The Adirondack is a real challenge," Dan says. "This wide open hull flaring broadly out amidships without any inside supports to create rigidity is prone to too much flexing," he continues. Dan is working at this with his foam core in mind, but right now he's still hunched over that plug. It'll be a while yet.

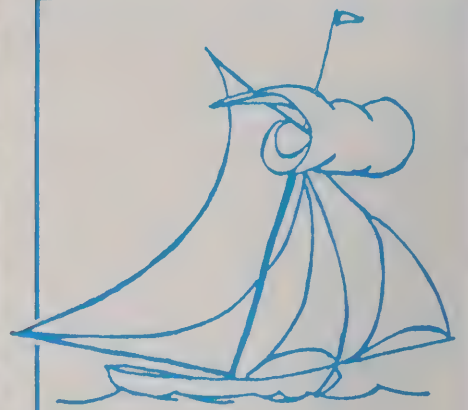
Back to the iceboat. Dan didn't have one on hand (the Challenger) to show me or to demonstrate, but we may get together yet with an owner in eastern Massachusetts. I certainly cannot say if Dan's claims are true, partly true or sales pitch. He refers to, "the fast growing 5 meter Challenger class with its elliptical fuselage and high performance as an experience in itself." in his advertising brochure. But I did like the punch line of his promotional material: "If you're an experienced iceboater and don't mind waving to your friends as you go by, we're ready to build one for you." Gotta like that confidence.

Interested? You can contact Dan Sheehan at 29 Pemberton Rd. Wayland, MA 01778, phone (617) 653-0355.



A Challenger on the ice in Minnesota.





## Howard Mittleman's North River Skiff

Report by Bob Hicks  
North River Boatworks Photos

We first met Howard Mittleman in 1981 at the Clearwater Revival at Croton-on-Hudson, New York. He had a very nice Swampscott Dory there at the boatbuilders' get-together, which is part of that annual festival. The Swampscott sort of surprised us when we learned that Howard was from Albany, NY. "I always had a liking for the dory," he explained then, so he went ahead and built one at his recently established boat building shop, North River Boatworks.

By 1983, Howard had developed several other "stock" boats for his small, slowly growing business. He had a 14' dory skiff and a 10' Chaisson tender, both indigenous to the Massachusetts north shore, 150 miles to the east of Albany. He had been surviving at his new business with repair and restoration work and had gotten into oar making to order also. But, it was time for something new, something more appropriate

to his location on the Hudson River. The 1983 Wooden Boat Show was on his calendar, so he bent his efforts to designing and building a lightweight double ended rowing skiff, named very appropriately, the North River Skiff.

The North River Skiff is a distillation of Howard's observations on the craft typical of upstate New York. It is not unlike a New England peapod in its double ended design but far lighter and built lapstrake. It's also a bit like a Maine Rangeley, but again, much lighter at just over 100 lbs. It is easily cartopped on even a compact sedan, its 15' x 3'10" dimensions complement those of an automobile.

The construction is lapstrake cedar plank over steamed white oak ribs, with ash and Douglas fir framing. Outside finish is a bright white, the interior is oiled natural. Howard has a transom model under construction that has a bit more bearing aft to take a light outboard if desired, just as the Rangeleys developed. The double ender is priced at \$2800, the transom model at \$2900.

Howard's repair and restoration work has included a large proportion of older Chris Crafts and similar runabouts. He has also done work with hard chine sailboats such as the Lightning. He says one of the more interesting restoration projects he has undertaken was a Belgrade Lake Launch. This is a motorized version of a Rangeley, he found that only about a dozen had ever been built, and that as far as he and the owner could ascertain, just this one and another in

quite poor condition at the Maine Maritime Museum are all that are left. The restored launch is now back in use on a lake not far from its original Belgrade area.

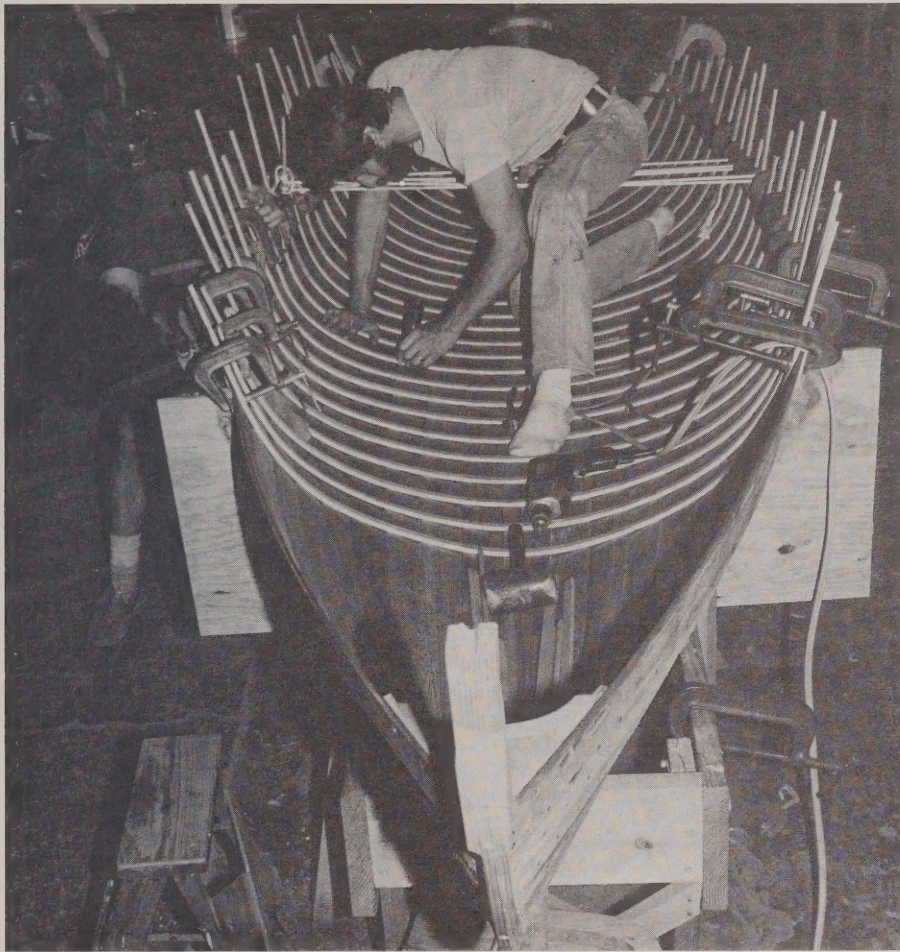
For a carpenter, mostly on house framing and general work, Howard Mittleman has come a long way towards his goal of being a boatbuilder for a living. He took his house carpentry and furniture making skills with him in 1978 to the Maine Maritime Museum for one of their Apprenticeship six week intern courses. "It was all too short," Howard admits. But, he returned home to become his own apprentice, found a very good position at a boatyard where he was able to do good woodwork and learn his chosen trade at the same time. From that beginning five years ago he has worked his way into his own full time business. As a realist, he still undertakes projects like stairs, architectural detail work, and custom cabinets whenever the boat work is in short supply. But those times are becoming fewer and fewer, and with his new North River Skiff, Howard Mittleman hopes to break into the classic pulling boat market, its a boat that's traditional in construction, pleasing to look at, easy to row in and out of tight spots for fishing, capable of being stood up in while fishing, and light enough to cartop. Seems like a pretty nice recipe for small craft enjoyment.

If you wish to inquire further about Howard Mittleman's boats, contact him at North River Boatworks, 6 Elm St., Albany, NY 12202, (518) 434-4414.



Howard and the original Swampscott.





Above: Hard at work in the shop bending in frames.  
Below: The finished product, a lovely light pulling boat.



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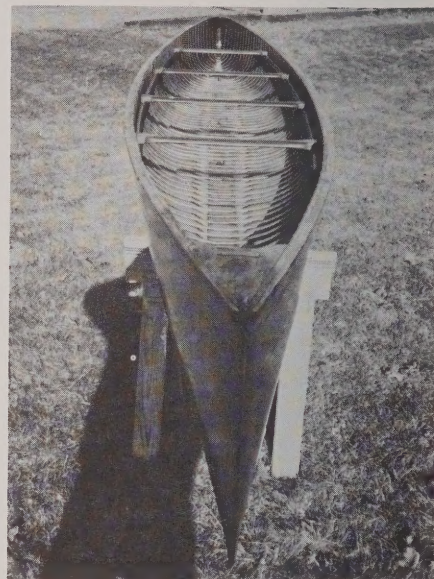
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**USED 1983 SEA KAYAK DEMONSTRATORS:** All excellent condition, ready to paddle. UMNAK 15' 5" Kevlar, hatches, bilge pump, deck lines, \$810. UMNAK fiberglass, all orange, deck lines, hatch, \$600. SEAFARER K-1, 16' 8" Kevlar with green deck, rear deck hatch, \$820. SEAFARER K-2, 20' fiberglass, rudder, translucent red, \$1000. DOUG BUSHNELL, West Side Boat Shop, P.O. Box 157, Station B, Buffalo, NY 14207, (716) 877-3305.



**21' ANTIQUE C-4 RACING CANOE,** built prior to 1938 by J.R. Robertson of Auburndale, MA. Bright finish inside and out, cedar strip planking on narrow bent frames, copper fastened. In near perfect condition (a few tiny dings on the gunwales, three or four cracked frames). A collector's item. \$2500, serious inquiries only, please. BOB HICKS, Wenham, MA 01984. (617) 774-0906.

**24' HOLLOW BOX MAST,** wooden plus 18' x 10' mainsail and 14' x 6' jib, both dacron and rigging. \$400. DAVID GILROY, Hartford, CT (203) 566-8188 days.

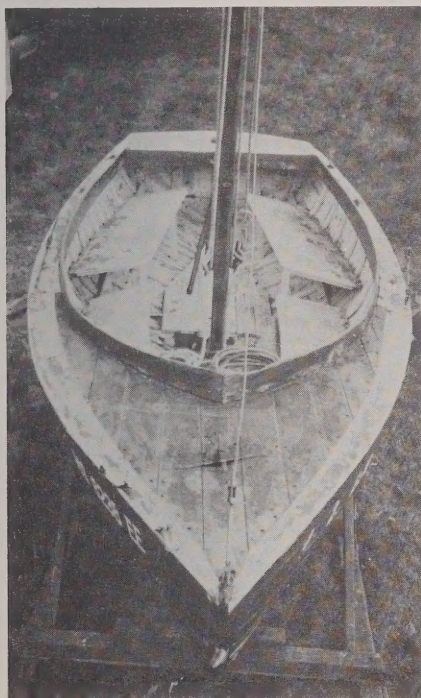
**18' INBOARD LAUNCH** built in 1941 by Cape Cod Shipbuilding. Has 4-112 Grey Marine. Hull fair, engine rough. Asking \$450. JOHN WHEBLE, Kingston, MA (617) 585-6962.

**WANTED:** Cylinder head, head gasket, lower half of powerhead cowl and propeller for Johnson 5 hp Model TN outboard, vintage around 1950. BOB WHITTIER, Box T, Duxbury, MA 02331.

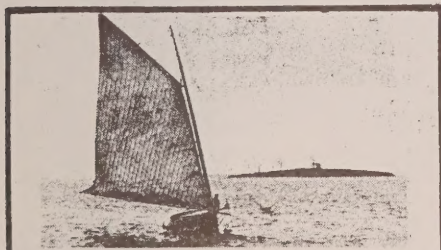
**4-CYLINDER BRENNAN IMP** marine engine in good running order. One 15' Chris Craft Cavalier, needs varnishing and bottom paint, new upholstery. Several wood and fiberglass boats, 14' to 22'. Hardware for inboard and outboard boats. DON FARNSWORTH, China, ME (207) 968-2932 or (207) 968-2011.



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WANTED: Propellor, shaft, etc. to fit 17' motor launch. Have hull and 3hp Gray, need everything else. RON GINGER, Framingham, MA (617) 877-8217.

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WANTED: Old mahogany runabouts such as Chris Crafts, Gar Woods, Hacker-crafts, for restoration. Also wanted are hardware, literature, pictures, models or any information relating to antique runabouts. DAVE PEACH, Marblehead, MA (617) 631-5571.

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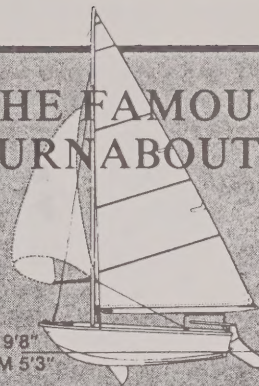


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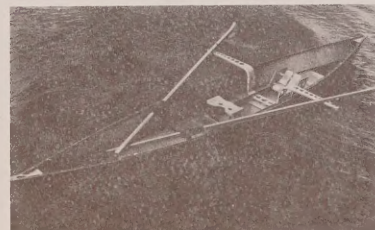


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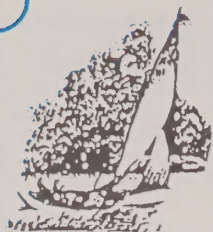
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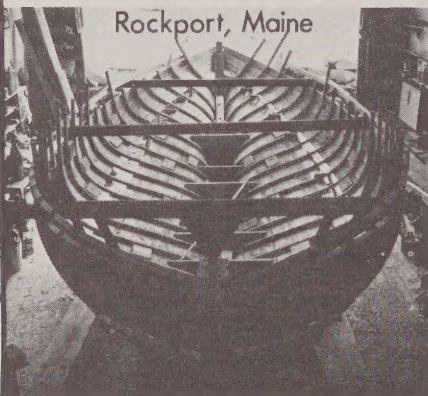
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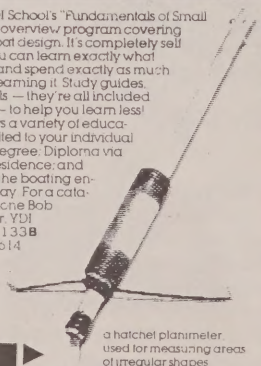
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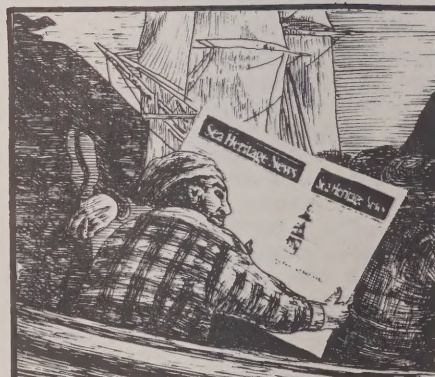
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